Student Athlete Identity, Does it Matter?

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The Pennsylvania State University
“Intercollegiate athletics is one of the salient filters through which the public views American postsecondary education.”

- Pascarella & Terenzini
Game Plan:

Introduction:
Why?
Research Question

Literature Review:
What's out there
What's Missing
Psychosocial Student Development
Athlete Identity – AIMS Scale

Research Design:
Limitations:

Implications / Conclusion:
Questions:
Why Athletes?

• Personal
  – Oversee Residential complex housing athletes
  – Deal with student athletes having problems
  – Observed the focus that peers and the general population give to this population

• Give me and possibly others a better understanding of this population
Research Question:

• Does student athlete identity influence the student development of Division I premier sport student athletes (men’s football and basketball)?
Scouting the players: What’s Out There?

- Stereotypes
- Faculty Impact
- Peer Impact
- Dress
- Training / Program Regiments
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Competition
- Body Image

- Alcohol / Drug usage – abuse
  - Steroids
- Burn out
- Injury
- Transition
  - High school to College to Pro
- Academics
- Team dynamic
- Athlete Identity – measurement scale
Where’s the field?
What’s missing?

• Impact athlete identity has on a student
• Student athlete college student development
• Rhetoric on athletes
Psychosocial Development:

- Possible Models to Choose From
- Chickering’s Theory of Identity Development
  - Development 1969, updated 1993
  - Proposes 7 vectors of development that contribute to identity formation
Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS):

- “Most widely accepted instrument for measuring athlete identity” – Groff
- Applied to elite athletes, recreational athletes, and non athletes
  - Comprised of 10 questions focusing on
    - Exclusivity
    - Social Identity
    - Self Identity
    - Negative affectivity
Research Question:

- Does student athlete identity influence the student development of Division I premier sport student athletes (men’s football and basketball)?
Research Design: Play Book:

• Participants
  – Pilot project at PSU with men’s football and basketball

• Procedure:
  – Computer based questioner
  – Include demographic information
  – Includes AIMS as well as series of questions related to Chickering’s Theory of Identity Development
• Date Analysis:
  – Use SPSS
  – Examine factors the Impact Psychosocial Development
    • Sport
    • Residence
    • Scholarship
Limitations:

- Sample – Male Division I premier sport athletes
- Application
- Own Biases
- Access to athletes
- Voluntary responses
- Specific to one psychosocial theory
Implications / Conclusion:

• Connection between student athlete identity and student psychosocial development
• Additional Lens
• Understanding that student athletes are not just another student but a unique population
• Better programs and services
Questions:
References:

References: